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CHINA'S NEW POLITICAL CONSULTATIVE CONFERENCE: ITS PRELIMINARY STAGES

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SUMMARY

The Chinese Communists have repeatedly announced their intention of calling a new Political Consultative Conference composed of all "democratic" parties and groups. Preliminary meetings to lay the foundations for such a conference have already been held. These meetings were attended by delegates from three major "blocs": the Chinese Communist Party; the "democratic parties" (minor non-Communist splinter groups based at Hongkong); and the "democratic elements" (occupational and functional groups).

The formal Political Consultative Conference, which will probably be held in the near future, will mark the initial stage in the evolution of a new national "coalition" government under Communist control. It will be the instrument whereby the Communists will modify the present constitution to suit their needs or create an entirely new constitutional pattern. Since it will enable the Communists to obtain continuity with a national political past (the Political Consultative Conference of 1946) and to minimise domestic criticism of their policies through a display of "democratic" sentiment, it will afford them a highly cogent means of obtaining the domestic sanctions they require. Essentially, however, it will be merely another Communist fiction, a "representative" assembly in which Communist control will be masked behind a facade of minor parties whose independence is nominal. The weakness of non-Communist groups and the fact that all the really important decisions

will have been made in advance lead to the inescapable conclusion that the Political Consultative Conference, divested of its "democratic" trappings, will be merely a rubber-stamp congress, summoned to lend its approval to policies handed down from a small group of Communist planners.

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CHINA'S NEW POLITICAL CONSULTATIVE CONFERENCE: ITS PRELIMINARY STAGES

INTRODUCTION

As their military power has increased, the Chinese Communists have been placing more and more emphasis on the importance of calling a Political Consultative Conference composed of all "democratic parties and groups." Important party leaders have already held preliminary meetings for the purpose of setting the stage for such a conference. The convening of a full-scale conference will probably follow the completion of peace negotiations between Communist and Kuomintang leaders.

The convocation of a new Communist-sponsored Political Consultative Conference will be one element in the Communist plan for effecting a transfer of political power in China.[1] Current indications are that a future political settlement of the present civil war may result either in the formation of a single "coalition" government for all of China, composed of Communist, Kuomintang, and "dissident" groups.

1. The problem of a transfer of political power in China has been discussed at length in OIR-4847, Transfer of Political Power in China, February 14, 1949, SECRET.

or in a territorial division of China into two relatively autonomous domains. The former solution, coalition government, would allow the Communists to enter a still functioning government, one that is already recognized at home and abroad as the legal government of China, and to expand their control over all of China gradually by peaceful means. For that reason, it is likely to be favored by Communist negotiators.

The concept of a new Political Consultative Conference is an integral part of Communist planning with regard to a "coalition" type of settlement. Should such a settlement be reached, the calling of a Political Consultative Conference would be the logical starting point for the creation of a "coalition" government, the initial phase of a transition from the present Nationalist Government to a new national government in which the Communists would play a dominant part.

The new Conference will probably be assigned the important task of making Communist-desired changes in the present constitution or drawing up the basic principles to be incorporated in a new constitution. In the former case, the Conference would be the means by which the Communists would accommodate themselves within the established pattern of government; in the latter, it would serve as an acceptable instrument for creating a new national government under Communist control. Whatever its precise role may be, it is clear that the Political Consultative Conference will be a highly important part of the total Communist plan for effecting a transfer of political power.

By enabling the Communists to establish continuity with the national political past (the Political Consultative Conference of 1946) and to minimize, by a show of "democratic" sentiment, the domestic criticism that their policies might provoke, it will afford them a highly coherent means of obtaining the domestic sanctions they require.

The convocation of a new Political Consultative Conference will be one part of the total Communist plan for erecting a new national government on the substructure of existing regional governments of the Liberated Areas, two of which already have their own "Provisional People's Assemblies." The oldest of these regional governments, the "North China People's Government," has already been hailed by Communist spokesmen as the "prototype" of a national coalition government for all of China. This national government, as envisioned by Communist planners, will be composed of three major blocs: the Communist Party; the so-called "democratic parties," (minor non-Communist parties); and the "democratic elements" (occupational and functional groups).

The purpose of the present study is to survey briefly all available data regarding the preliminary meetings of the Political Consultative Conference with a view toward determining, as far as possible: (1) the major groups represented at the preliminary meetings; (2) the probable composition of the formal Political Consultative Conference; and (3) the place of the Conference in Communist planning and its probable role in China's political future.

I. BACKGROUND OF THE NEW POLITICAL CONSULTATIVE CONFERENCE

A. Historical Context of the Political Consultative Conference

The potential importance of a new Political Consultative Conference (PCC) becomes clearer when the Conference is considered within its proper historical context -- or, more accurately, contexts, since the Conference should be viewed in both the narrow context of Communist doctrine and the broad national context that includes the PCC of 1946.

1. Place of the PCC in Communist Thinking. The zeal with which the Communists have called for the convening of a new Political Consultative Conference may be more easily understood when the Communist concept of a PCC is related to the larger context of Communist doctrine with regard to a united front and coalition government. Historically, the Communist concepts of "coalition" and "united front" have their roots in the brief period of Communist unity with the Kuomintang (1924 - 1927), a period symbolically important in Communist thinking. The concept of the united front emerged as a formal part of Communist doctrine in about 1932. It was this idea of an alliance of all "democratic" and "progressive" parties, led by the Chinese Communist Party, that provided the doctrinal matrix of

the Communist concept of "coalition" government and of a Political Consultative Conference.[1]

2. Roots of the New PCC in the PCC of 1946. A new PCC in China would have roots in a generally intelligible and meaningful Chinese past, since it would be the successor to the PCC of 1946. The earlier PCC, a body composed of delegates from all major political parties, has had a symbolic value incommensurate with its actual accomplishments, which were relatively minor. It has become a symbol of potential national unity through compromise -- a symbol that the Communists can use to great advantage. A new PCC similar to the old would allow them to establish continuity with the national

1. Coalition is, in Communist eyes, a stage halfway between the old government dominated by "bureaucratic capitalism" and the new government led by the proletariat and the Communist Party. The idea of a temporary coalition with "progressive" elements does not replace the ultimate Communist goal of a "dictatorship of the proletariat." Coalition is simply the political expression of the initial phase of socialistic development, the "New Democracy," and is to be followed, in due time, by the truly socialistic (Communistic) state, in which all power will rest with the proletariat and its leader, the Chinese Communist Party. It is thus apparent that by advocating a "coalition" with non-Communist parties the Communists are in no sense abandoning their ultimate goal of a Communist society, but are merely working toward that end.

political past and to obtain the sanctions that such continuity would provide.[1]

B. Genesis of the new Political Consultative Conference: the May Day Alliance.

On April 30, 1948, the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party came forward with an appeal for a united front "against imperialist, feudal and bureaucratic capitalist forces" and urged that "all democratic parties and groups, people's organizations, and 'social luminaries' speedily convene a Political Consultative Conference, and establish a

1. Even after their withdrawal from the PCC of 1946, the Communists continued to emphasize the importance of the PCC as a potential means of achieving national unity. One indication of this was a statement by Chou En-lai in late December 1946 in which he outlined the conditions acceptable to the Communists for renewing peace negotiations. One of these conditions was the "reconvening of a conference of all parties and groups to consult on all matters ..." (North Shensi Broadcasts, USIS, Shanghai, December 29-30, 1946, UNCLASSIFIED).

   The Communists apparently have conceived of the PCC as a potentially "permanent" political institution with real power to enforce its decisions -- a view not shared by the Kuomintang, which has tended to regard it as a mere forum for political discussion. The Communist view of the PCC as a political organ transcending the ordinary sphere of government was expressed in the statement of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party concerning the "traitorous" treaties. That statement declared: "Until China has a really democratic parliament, all important internal and diplomatic affairs which would be passed by a parliament in democratic countries should pass through this conference or obtain the agreement of major political parties and groups ..." (FBIB, Daily Report, February 5, 1947, p.- BB-1, RESTRICTED)

Democratic Coalition Government."[1]

This Communist call for an Anti-Kuomintang alliance struck a responsive chord among a group of political refugees in voluntary exile at Hongkong who were leading small and rather ineffectual splinter groups. These exiled leaders immediately seized upon the Communist offer of alliance and on May 5 sent a telegram to Mao Tse-tung in which they stated that they concurred with the proposals of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party. This important telegram was signed by leaders of eight leading "dissident" groups: the Kuomintang Revolutionary Committee, the San Min Chu I Comrades' Association, the Kuomintang Democratic Promotion Society, the Democratic League, the Peasants' and Workers' Democratic Party (also known as the Third Party), the National Salvation Association, the Chinese Democratic Promotion Society, and the Chih Kung Tang (a secret society sometimes referred to as the "Chinese Masons"). Three of these groups -- the Democratic League, the National Salvation Association, and the Chinese Democratic Promotion Society -- had participated in the PCC of 1946, in which they had lent their support, by and large, to the Communists. The Kuomintang Revolutionary Committee (KMTRC), which had formerly been rather cool toward overt cooperation with the Communists, may have been encouraged to join the May Day alliance by two considerations: a need for financial support, and a hope that by cooperating closely with

1. New China News Agency, April 30, 1948.

the Communists it might strengther its own hand in a future political settlement.[1]

II. THE PRELIMINARY MEETINGS OF THE PCC

A. Their Function and Purpose

During the past six months a number of preparatory conferences have been called at Mukden, Harbin, and Shih-chia-chuang, at which leaders of non-Communist dissident groups have conferred with leading members of the Chinese Communist Party.[2] These preliminary conferences were held to iron out in advance any major differences of opinion and to lay the foundations for a formal meeting of the PCC itself. The concept underlying these preliminary talks was expressed by Marshal Li Chi-shen of the Kuomintang Revolutionary Committee, who commented that, in his opinion, "all major decisions should be settled ... before they are presented to the PCC for its consideration ..."[3] The function, then, of these preparatory conferences was the predetermination of policy, behind closed doors, by a small group of party leaders.

1. The Kuomintang Revolutionary Committee had formerly sought financial aid from American sources without success. There is evidence from "reliable" Chinese sources that the Committee and other groups at Hongkong had been infiltrated by the South China Bureau of the Chinese Communist Party, led by P'an Han-nien. See D-2, Hongkong, January 14, 1949, CONFIDENTIAL.
2. The reason for the shifting of the scene of these conferences is not known. One explanation would be that at the time when the conferences began it was impossible for the "dissident" delegates to go directly to Shih-chia-chuang by a land route. Therefore a circuitous route was adopted, via Dairen, Harbin, Mukden, etc.
3. D-32, Hongkong, encl. 1, August 21, 1948, SECRET.

B. Representation at the Preliminary Meetings

1. Principle of Selection and its Significance. The principle employed by the Communists in selecting delegates to the preliminary conferences was obviously to include representatives from as many different groups as possible, however weak, small, or insignificant they might be.[1] The very fact that the Communists chose to subdivide the major "democratic parties" represented, such as the Democratic League, into their smallest possible components is evidence of an attempt to create an illusion of multiplicity. The basic principle here, as elsewhere in Communist practice, was the well-known Communist subterfuge of creating a fiction of "democracy" by granting token participation in their councils to a large number of small splinter groups whose nominal independence of Communist leadership served to mask the reality of Communist control.[2]

1. The actual process involved in the selection of delegates to these preliminary conferences is not known. One report, of uncertain reliability, suggests that each major group drew up a list of its candidates and submitted them to the Chinese Communist Party for its approval or rejection. Other reports would suggest that "invitations," tantamount to orders, were relayed from the North China Bureau of the Chinese Communist Party via the South China Bureau to individual leaders at Hongkong. For a complete listing of the "dissident" delegates invited to the preliminary conferences, see Appendix.

2. As might be expected, the individuals from within the various non-Communist groups were selected in such a way as to eliminate the more "rightist" leaders from the conference. The absence of certain important leaders of moderate tendencies, such as Lo Lung-chi, a key figure in the Democratic League and its representative at the PCC of 1946, was probably no coincidence.

2. Groups Represented at the Preliminary Conferences. The delegates to the preliminary conferences were divided into three major blocs: the Chinese Communist Party, the so-called "democratic parties," and the so-called "democratic elements."

a. The Chinese Communist Party. The leading roles in the preliminary conferences were undoubtedly played by members of the Chinese Communist Party. Information concerning actual Communist representation is incomplete and of doubtful reliability. It is known, however, that Communist Party leaders associated with the preliminary meetings included prominent members of both the North China and the Northeast (Manchurian) sections of the Chinese Communist Party. Among the North China group were Yeh Chien-ying, Tung Pi-wu, Nieh Jung-chen, and Po Yi-po.[1] Among the northeast group were Li Fu-ch'un and Kao Ch'ung-min.[2]

b. The "democratic parties." The "democratic parties" represented at the conferences were small groups that had been operating from "exile" in Hongkong. These groups were not "parties" in the ordinary

1. Yeh is the new Communist mayor of Peiping; Tung has been chairman of the North China Bureau of the Chinese Communist Party; Po is first vice-chairman of the North China Bureau of the party; Nieh has been commander of the North China Military District.

2. Li is vice-chairman of the Finance Commission of the Northeast Liberated Area; Kao, vice-chairman of the Northeast Administrative Council.

sense of the word, but merely cliques supporting individual politicians or small splinter groups that lacked any mass following. They had long been exposed to Communist influence. Most of them had been cooperating with the Chinese Communist Party, and their leaders, in many cases, had openly endorsed or echoed the Communist line.

1. The Democratic League. One of the two major "democratic parties" represented was the Democratic League. The league is a conglomeration of many small political groups and cliques, including: (a) the National Salvation Association; (b) the Vocational Educational Association; (c) the Peasants' and Workers' Democratic Association (or Third Party); (d) the Rural Reconstruction Clique; and (e) other small groups.[1] As might be expected, the Communists, for purposes of representation at the conferences, broke the League into its smallest possible components in order to create an illusion of great multiplicity among the groups represented. Thus the National Salvationists were separately represented by Shen Chih-yuan, while the Peasants and Workers Party was separately represented by Ch'iu Chu, a member of the Central Executive Committee of the League. The College Teachers' League, a group that has been affiliated with the League in the past,

1. Other groups that have been associated with the League in the past include such minor ones as the Revolutionary Clique of Democratic Socialists, the Northeast Clique, the Northwest Clique, and the Leftist Clique of the Kuomintang.

may also have been represented as an independent group; its leader, Teng Chu-min, is known to have been invited to the conferences.[1]

ii. The Kuomintang Revolutionary Committee. The second major group included among the "democratic parties" was the Kuomintang Revolutionary Committee, led by Marshal Li Chi-shen. The Committee is a loose federation of many small political cliques, of which the most important are the San Min Chu I Comrades' Association, the Kuomintang Democratic Promotion Association, and the China Labor Party.[2]

The Kuomintang Revolutionary Committee itself and each of its major component groups appear to have been represented separately at the preliminary conferences. The Committee itself was represented by Li Chi-shen and Mme. Feng Yu-hsiang; the China Labor Party (a group of great potential value to the Communists) by Chu Hsueh-fan; the Democratic Promotion Society by Ts'ai T'ing-K'ai and Ma Hsu-lun; and the San Min Chu I Comrades by Tan P'ing-shan. Again, as in the case of the League, an effort seems to have been made to create an appearance of multiple participation by having each component group separately represented.

1. The College Teachers' League, led by Lo Lung-chi and Teng Ch'u-min, is known to have been affiliated with the Democratic League as late as August 1943. Its present status is not known.

2. Other groups reported to be affiliated with the Committee are the West Hills Conference Faction, the Reorganization Faction, the People's Government Faction, the China Revolutionary Party, and the Northern Alliance.

iii. Other "democratic parties." Another minor political party known to have been represented at the preliminary meetings is the Democratic Reconstruction Association. It would seem reasonable to assume that two other groups that were parties to the May Day Alliance, namely, the Chih Kung Tang and the China Democratic Promotion Association, were also represented.[1]

c. "Democratic elements" (People's organizations"). The third major bloc of delegates to the preliminary conferences, the "democratic elements," was a heterogeneous collection of "independent" intellectuals and the various occupational and functional groups commonly referred to by the Communists as "people's organizations." In the recent past the Communists have been creating many of these "people's organizations," which include women's groups, labor and peasant groups, youth

1. In addition to the groups known to have been represented, it is possible that the Communists may have given representation to some of the small, weak parties and groups that have been operating on the periphery of the Democratic League and of the Kuomintang Revolutionary Committee. Of these the most likely would seem to be the National Students' Union and the United People's Association, both of which have the reputation of being front organizations for the Chinese Communist Party. Other minor parties and groups that have been associated with the League in the past and might have been included because of their weakness and possible subservience to Communist aims are the following: China Association for the Protection of International Human Rights, University Teachers' Fellowship Association, Industrial and Commercial Association, China Women's Fellowship Association, Association of Financial Circles for the Promotion of Democracy, China Border Research Society, and the Northeast Political Reconstruction Association.

and student groups, etc., within their own territories and have gradually been amalgamating them into larger national federations, such as the All-China Federation of Democratic Women, the New Democratic Youth League, and the All-China Students' Conference.[1] This effort to go outside the organized political groupings and select representatives from various social layers and functional groups is in keeping with the Communist doctrines of the "New Democracy" and the united front. The creation of these groups is an integral part of the evolution of Communist government on a regional level, and, as the evolutionary process continues, these groups will undoubtedly play an increasingly important part in Communist planning. Eventually they will probably be used extensively as a source of delegates to the formal Communist-sponsored PCC, in which they will provide a useful facade of "popular" representation.

In view of the important place of these functional groups in Communist planning, it is not surprising that large numbers of delegates from such groups based in non-Communist areas were invited to the preliminary conferences. As might be expected, these delegates were selected on the basis of their past willingness to cooperate with

1. Other organizational activities of this nature that might be mentioned here are: the All-China Labor Conference of August 1948, the Commercial and Industrial Conferences of September 1948, and the forthcoming Chinese National Students' Conference.

the Communists. The precise groups that these delegates represented at the conferences is not known, but it is possible, by grouping the delegates according to their individual occupational backgrounds and organizational affiliations, to arrive at the following approximate grouping of the "democratic elements" that they represented.[1]

1. Writers and intellectuals. One of the most important groups at the preliminary conferences was a delegation of writers, journalists, and intellectuals who were leftist and pro-Communist in their thinking. This group included such literary personages as Kuo Mo-jo, a delegate to the PCC of 1946; Mao Tun, an eminent novelist; Hung Shen, a prominent playwright; and a number of well-known journalists, such as Yang Kang of the Ta Kung Pao. Most of these intellectuals were self-styled "independents" and "non-partisans," but their writings have frequently echoed the Communist Party line.[2]

The inclusion of these literary figures in conferences supposedly political in nature may be explained by reference to the Communist theory of the role of literature in the revolutionary process, a theory expounded by Mao Tse-tung in May 1942. At that

1. For a more detailed listing of the delegates from these "democratic elements," see Appendix.

2. This is particularly true in the cases of Kuo Mo-jo and Mao Tun, who have consistently endorsed the Communist line.

time Mao stated that literature must be made "an integral part of the complete machinery of revolution" and hinted that all literary talent would be mobilized in the service of the Communist Party.[1]

ii. Professionals ("enlightened bourgeois"). A second important segment of the "democratic elements" represented at the conferences was composed of professional people such as educators, industrialists, economists, and engineers. Among the delegates from educational circles were Wu Han, a professor of history at Tsinghua University; Yuan Chen, former professor at Peking National University; and Hou Wai-lu, a member of the faculty of Ta Teh University at Hongkong. Industrial and managerial circles were represented by Chang Nai-chi, a well-known banker and industrialist.[2] Economists present included Li Tu-chen and Sun Pin-lu. The inclusion of delegates from managerial and entrepreneurial circles was in keeping with the Communists' declarations that they intended to cooperate with "enlightened" private capitalists.

iii. Women's groups. An important delegation to the conferences consisted of representatives of various women's organizations. The most

1. "Talks on Literature" by Mao Tse-tung, New York Daily Worker, January 31, 1949, and subsequent issues.

2. Chang has been prominently mentioned as a likely candidate for the job of manager of the People's Bank, the Communist counterpart of the Bank of China.

prominent were Tsao Meng-chun (wife of Wang K'un-lun, member of the Democratic League) and Chou Ying, both of whom had been associated with the All-China Women's Conference.[1]

iv. Labor and peasant unions. The urban labor and peasant unions constituted another important component of the "democratic elements." These labor groups will form the chief support of a new national government under Communist control. They were probably represented at the conferences by Chu Hsueh-fan, leader of the China Labor Party, who, since joining the Communist camp in 1948, has been active in organizing peasant and labor unions in the vicinity of Harbin.

v. Youth and student groups. Also present were representatives of organizations of students and young people, such as the New Democratic Youth League (a Communist-sponsored organization).

vi. Overseas Chinese. Chinese nationals overseas have long been designated by the Communists as one of the "democratic elements" to be represented in a new national government. Among the overseas groups known to have been represented at the conferences were the

1. Chou Ying was formerly Secretary general of the Chinese Association of Labor.

Chih Kung Tang and the Chinese Democratic League of Malaya.[1]

vii. Formosans. The people of Formosa were "represented at the conferences by Hsieh Hsueh-hung, a member of the Executive

1. The Chih Kung Tang was represented by Ch'en Ch'i-yu; the Chinese Democratic League of Malaya by Hu Yu-chih, a prominent journalist. The Chih Kung Tang is an offshoot of the old Hung Men Chih Kung Tang, a conglomerate of several secret societies that dates back some 400 years; the other branches have remained loyal to the Kuomintang. The Chih Kung Tang is reported to have some 800,000 members, most of whom are overseas Chinese. The Democratic League of Malaya was organized in 1946 as a branch of the Democratic League of China proper. Its headquarters have been at Singapore. Among its key personnel are many persons formerly affiliated with the Malayan Communist Party. The Democratic League is reported to be numerically stronger in Malaya and the rest of Southeast Asia than in China proper. (The Democratic League in China is reported to have an active membership of about 8,000.).

Other groups that may have been represented at the conferences are the New Democratic Youth League of Malaya (which has a membership of 25,000 and is based largely at Singapore) and the various overseas branches of the Kuomintang Revolutionary Committee.

Overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia are reported to total some nine million persons. Most of these live in Siam (some two or three million) and in Malaya (some two million). Other large communities have developed in Indonesia (two million) and in Indochina (400,000). These overseas Chinese communities were an important source of income for the Nationalist Government of China, which reaped large sums yearly in the form of overseas remittances. The political rights of these overseas Chinese were recognized by the Nationalist Government in the Constitution of January 1, 1947, which granted them the right to elect members of the Legislative and Control Yuans. The affairs of overseas Chinese were regularly handled by a special branch of the Executive Yuan, the Committee on Overseas Chinese Affairs. The numerical strength and wealth of these overseas Chinese communities have made them a highly desirable target for Communist infiltration and control.

Committee of the League for Democratic Self-Government of Formosa, a Communist-dominated organization.[1]

viii. Other groups. Other groups recently mentioned by the Communists as being among the "democratic elements" that they intend to include in a future PCC are the "enlightened gentry" and ethnic minorities.[2] Neither of these groups seems to have been represented

1. Hsieh Hsueh-hung was the leader of a small group of Formosan Communists at Hongkong from 1947 to 1949. A Communist statement issued in February 1949 announced that she would represent the people of Formosa at the forthcoming formal meeting of the PCC. The inclusion of representatives from Formosa in the preliminary conferences was part of a Communist propaganda campaign aimed at winning the support of Formosan independence groups and tribal minorities. In their February statement, the Communists declared that they considered the Taiwanese revolution as an integral part of the Chinese Revolution and promised that tribal groups on Formosa would be given political rights equal to those of the rest of the population. (The Communist statement was published in the Wen Hui Pao, February 28, 1949. See D-55, Hongkong, March 3, 1949, CONFIDENTIAL).

2. The Communist policy toward "enlightened gentry" was outlined by Jen Pi-shih, a member of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, in a speech delivered before an enlarged session of the People's Liberation Army Front Committee on January 12, 1948. Pertinent sections of this speech may be found in the North Shensi Broadcasts, New China News Agency, April 18, 1948. The Communist united front as of January 1948 was defined as including the following groups and blocs: "workers, peasants, students, all oppressed classes, all people's organizations, all democratic parties and groups, and national minorities, overseas Chinese, etc." (FBIB, Daily Report, January 5, 1948, p.- PPP-7, RESTRICTED).

at the preliminary conferences. This, however, is not in itself a valid indication that they will be excluded from the formal PCC.[1]

C. Agenda and Scope of the Preliminary Conferences

The issues discussed at the preliminary conferences probably included all major problems pertaining to the formation of a provisional "coalition" government. Among the issues known to have been placed on the agenda were the following:

1. The Political Consultative Conference -- date and site, convening authority; role and functions, agenda, methods of electing delegates, groups to be represented, etc.

2. The formation of a People's Representative Assembly -- method of electing delegates, method of convening, etc.

3. The question of the need for an "interim" national government (as distinct from a "coalition" government).

4. The selection of key personnel to fill top administrative posts in a new government.[2]

1. Ethnic minorities were guaranteed at least a nominal participation in government by the Nationalist Constitution of January 1947. Regional groups, such as Tibetans and Mongols, were explicitly given the right to send representatives to the National Assembly and to elect members to the Legislative and Control Yuans. The participation of other ethnic minorities was less explicitly defined, the various groups being lumped together in a common category ("various racial groups in the border regions"). A decision on the part of the Communists to exclude minority groups from a future government would expose them to the charge of being even more "undemocratic" than the Kuomintang.

2. Detailed information concerning the agenda and decisions of the preliminary conferences is not currently available.

Perhaps the most important item on the agenda at these preliminary conferences was the method to be employed in selecting representatives to the formal meeting of the PCC. This question of proportionate representation has already been a source of considerable friction among the Communists and their allies and will undoubtedly loom large in future discussions.

1. The Hongkong Agreements. According to the original agreements reached at Hongkong between the Communists and the minority party leaders, one-third of the delegates to the forthcoming formal meeting of the PCC were to be chosen by the Chinese Communist Party, one-third by the "democratic parties" (minor non-Communist groups), and one-third by the "democratic elements" (occupational and functional groups, such as students' groups, labor groups, etc.). Such a scheme of representation is vaguely reminiscent of the "one in three" system of government advocated by Mao in the period 1941-46 -- a system that, in theory, would give non-Communist groups a two-thirds majority. In actuality, however, most of the "democratic elements," such as labor unions and students and women's groups, are infiltrated and controlled by the Chinese Communist Party and would constitute an independent force only in name. And the "democratic parties" are also to some extent under Communist influence.

2. The Shih-chia-chuang Agreements. At a later meeting of senior leaders of the Chinese Communist Party held at Shih-chia-chuang, objections to the Hongkong agreements were raised by Communist

representatives from Manchuria, who contended that they were entitled to representation equal to that of the Communists south of the Great Wall. Accordingly, it was proposed that the ratio agreed upon at Hongkong be abandoned in favor of a new system of representation whereby one-half of the delegates to the PCC would be chosen from Communist ranks and the remainder from the "democratic parties" and "democratic groups." When this proposal was put before a meeting of "dissident" non-Communist delegates at Mukden, they rejected it and held out for the original agreements. Thus, no final agreement was reached on the vital question of representation. It is sufficiently clear, however, that either the original plan or its successor would give the Communists a majority in a future PCC -- the chief difference being that under the original plan (the "one in three" system) Communist control would be semi-overt and exercised through front organizations, while under the new plan no attempt would be made to hide the fact of Communist predominance.

III. THE FORMAL POLITICAL CONSULTATIVE CONFERENCE

A. Probable Date of Convocation and Site

The convocation of a formal meeting of the PCC was originally scheduled for January or February 1949, but later postponed, reportedly at the order of the Chinese Communist Party, until May or June. The date of the formal PCC is contingent upon the successful completion of peace negotiations between Communist and Kuomintang leaders. Should negotiations be concluded at an early date, the formal meeting of the PCC is likely to be postponed until early summer. If, however, negotiations fail, it is possible that the formal PCC will be held in the very near future.

The most likely site for the formal PCC is Peiping, since it is both a traditional center of Chinese political and cultural life and the new Communist capital of the North China Liberated Area.

B. Probable Size and Composition

The exact size of the new PCC is not yet known. Available reports vary widely -- one indicating that it may be a large body of over 1,000 delegates, another that it may be a much more compact group of 240.

The composition of the formal PCC which will foreshadow the composition of the new national government envisaged by Communist planners, will probably correspond, in general, to that of the preliminary conferences. The formal PCC will probably be composed of the same three major structural units or blocs: the Chinese Communist Party, the "democratic parties" (non-Communist splinter groups), and the

so-called "democratic elements" (groups of "independent" writers and intellectuals, representatives of women's groups, etc.) The non-Communist groups that will be represented at the formal PCC will probably be the same parties and groups whose leading members were invited to participate in the preliminary conferences. If the preliminary conferences are regarded as a prototype of the formal PCC, it may be assumed that the major non-Communist parties and groups represented at the latter will include the following:

1. "Democratic Parties":
   a. The Democratic League and its affiliates:
      (1) The National Salvation Association.
      (2) Peasants and Workers' Democratic Party.
      (3) Vocational Education Association.

   b. Kuomintang Revolutionary Committee and its affiliates:
      (1) San Min Chu I Comrades' Association.
      (2) Kuomintang Democratic Promotion Society.
      (3) "Enlightened" segments of the Kuomintang proper.[1]

2. "Democratic Elements":
   a. So-called "independent" intellectuals and writers.
   b. University professors.
   c. Women's organizations.
   d. Other occupational and functional groups, such as labor unions, peasant unions, student groups, youth groups, "enlightened gentry," etc.
   e. Overseas Chinese organizations.
   f. Ethnic minorities (Moslems, Turki, etc.).

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1. Despite the fulminations of Communist spokesmen against the "reactionary Kuomintang government," the inclusion of some "enlightened" segment of the Kuomintang in a Communist-sponsored PCC is not impossible. Recent evidence -- such as Communist appeals to "Kuomintang members with a conscience" to unite with the Chinese Communist Party; Communist wooing of certain Kuomintang warlords, notably Pai Ch'ung-hsi; and a general softening of the Communist demands for the punishment of war criminals -- would indicate that the Communists may adopt a fairly moderate policy toward individual Kuomintang members.

   The possibility that the Kuomintang will be admitted as a bloc into a new Communist-sponsored regime is difficult to reconcile either with Communist strategy or with recent Communist policy toward the Kuomintang as a party in areas under Communist control. The most likely possibility would seem to be that the Communists will accommodate some "purged" segment of the Kuomintang only, on an individual membership basis. This "rump" Kuomintang will probably be accommodated through the Kuomintang Revolutionary Committee, which will probably be given the task of screening individual members of the Kuomintang on the basis of past political performances.

c. The Place of the Non-Communist Parties in Communist Planning

The inclusion of the "democratic parties" in a future Political Consultative Conference is entirely in keeping with Communist doctrine and would offer the Communists certain obvious advantages.[1] These parties have enjoyed a reputation, among Chinese, for liberal respectability and could therefore be used quite effectively by the Communists to window-dress a future PCC for domestic and foreign consumption. Moreover, since most of these parties have drawn their chief support from the middle classes, they would furnish the Communists a potentially useful medium for obtaining the cooperation and allegiance of those managers, industrialists, bankers, and technicians whose services they will probably need. Groups such as the Democratic League and the Revolutionary Committee of the Kuomintang might well serve as mediating agencies between the Communist Party and individual members of the petty and middle bourgeoisie who desire to make their peace with the Communists and yet retain some remnant of political respectability. Through these parties also the Communists would find it possible to tap the lower and middle strata of the Kuomintang bureaucracy and obtain the services of those trained and experienced civil administrators they will undoubtedly need in order to undertake the herculean task of governing all of China.

1. Communist awareness of the need for close cooperation with the urban middle classes was revealed by Mao Tse-tung in his speech of December 25, 1947. At that time Mao declared that "The objects which the New Democratic Revolution is to eliminate are only the landlord class and the bureaucratic bourgeoisie, not the petty bouregoisie and the middle bourgeoisie...." (FBIB, Daily Report, (Far Eastern Section), January 2, 1948, pp. FFF-7-11).

D. Potential Influence of Non-Communist Groups in the Political Consultative Conference

The fact that almost all of the major non-Communist parties and groups in China (except the more conservative parties, such as the Youth Party and Social Democrats) will be represented at the formal PCC must not be interpreted to mean that anything like a strong opposition bloc will be formed.

Despite their strength in numbers, the influence of the "democratic parties" will be negligible. For the most part they are small, being either merely cliques supporting individual politicians or small splinter groups that lack any mass following.[1] Since most of them have operated from "exile" at Hongkong and have therefore been relatively isolated, they do not have strong roots in the Chinese countryside that would enable them to mobilize mass opinion. Their leaders are, in general, intellectuals and not men of action. As a whole they have not had financial independence or access to military power. These groups, being both small and weak, have been ideal targets for Communist infiltration and pressure. Two of the major groups, the Kuomintang Revolutionary Committee, and the Democratic

1. Complete data on party membership of these groups is lacking, since, like most Chinese political organizations, they have tended to operate semi-covertly. The Kuomintang Revolutionary Committee, which is essentially a clique of disaffected Kuomintang members, is known to have a membership at Hongkong of 200, with an underground membership of several thousand. The active strength of the Peasants and Workers' Party (Third Party) has been estimated at 6,000; that of the Chih Kung Tang at 800,000. The Democratic League has been reported to have an active membership of some 8,000.

League, have long been exposed to Communist pressure through the South China Bureau of the Chinese Communist Party headed by P'an Han-nien.[1] The degree to which the Hongkong groups have fallen under the sway of the Communist Party is reflected by the fact that they have in recent months consistently followed or endorsed the party line.[2]

The role of the "democratic elements" in the new PCC will probably be equally unimportant. This bloc is, if anything, even less independent of Communist control. It is composed partly of intellectuals who have consistently followed the party line and partly of functional and occupational groups that are merely creatures of the Chinese Communist Party. In this bloc the Communists will find even more ready support.

E. Probable Role of a Formal Political Consultative Conference

The convocation of a formal PCC will mark the initial stage in the evolution of a Communist-type government for all of China. The PCC is one important element in the total Communist plan for effecting a transfer of political power in China, a plan that calls for the development of the regional governments of the Liberated Areas and the eventual creation of a "People's Representative Assembly."

1. One outstanding illustration of the degree to which the Communists have succeeded in infiltrating the Kuomintang Revolutionary Committee is the fact that Marshal Li Chi-shen's press relations officer, since the summer of 1948, has been Mason Wu, a covert Communist Party member.
2. The most striking proof of this is the statement issued by the 55 "dissidents" on January 22, 1949. (North Shensi Broadcast Transcripts, January 23, 1949), which echoed the Communist speeches of late December and early January.

Its role, as announced by the Communists in a New Year's Day editorial, will be "to proclaim the establishment of the Chinese People's Democratic Republic" and to organize the central government of the Republic."[1] One important function of a new PCC will probably be to propose Communist-desired amendments of the present constitution or to formulate the basic principles to be incorporated in an entirely new constitution.[2] In the former case, the PCC would be the instrument whereby the Communists could fit themselves into the established pattern of government; in the latter, it would serve as the initial instrument for creating an entirely new system of government.

F. Significance of a Formal Political Consultative Conference

The significance of the PCC in terms of Communist strategy lies in the fact that it is a potentially valuable means of establishing continuity with a generally intelligible national past, since it has roots in the PCC of 1946, a body that has become a national symbol of political unity through compromise and multi-party negotiations. By enabling the Communists to gain that important element of continuity, a new PCC will afford them a means of bridging the gap between the present Nationalist Government and a new national

1. An editorial entitled, "Let Us Carry the Revolution to the End", issued by the New China News Agency on December 30, 1948. (FBIB, Daily Report, January 3, 1949, p. CCC-2).
2. The role of the PCC itself would probably involve the drafting of certain general resolutions regarding constitutional amendments or basic principles to be incorporated into a new constitution. The actual drafting of amendments or of a new constitution would probably be done by a separate constitutional assembly. Ratification would probably be reserved for the "People's Representative Assembly."

government under their control. Moreover, by affording the Communists an opportunity for a grand display of "democracy," it will provide them with a very cogent means of minimizing domestic criticism and of obtaining the domestic sanctions they require.

While it is clear that the PCC justifiably occupies an important place in Communist planning, it is equally clear that the actual significance of the PCC itself as a "parliamentary" body will be almost negligible. The weakness of the non-Communist groups and the fact that all major issues will have been decided upon in advance lead to the inescapable conclusion that the PCC, divested of its democratic trappings, will be merely a rubber-stamp congress, convened to lend its approval to policies handed down from a small group of Communist planners.

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APPENDIX

LIST OF DELEGATES TO THE PRELIMINARY MEETINGS OF THE POLITICAL CONSULTATIVE CONFERENCE[1]

Name of Delegate	Party Affiliation
An O	Unknown
Chang Man-yün	"
Chang Nai-chi	Democratic Reconstruction Association; also Democratic League
Chang Po-chün	Peasants and Workers' Party; Democratic League
Ch'en Ch'i-yu	Chih Kung Tang
Ch'ien Po-tsan	Democratic League
Ch'iu Che	Democratic League; Peasants and Workers' Party
Chou Chien-jen	Unknown (Brother of writer Lu Hsün) (China Democratic Promotion Society?)
Chou Ying (Yu Chih-ying?)	Woman secretary of Chinese Association of Labor; delegate to All-China Women's Conference
Chu Hsüeh-fan	Chinese Labor Party; Kuomintang Revolutionary Committee
Ch'u T'u-nan	Democratic League

1. This list is based upon a list of so-called "dissidents" leaders of Hongkong splinter groups who signed a joint statement endorsing the Communist peace program in mid-January 1948. (FBIB, Daily Report, January 24, 1949, p. PPP-1) Party designations are only approximate.

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Name of Delegate	Party Affiliation
Chu Yün-shan	Democratic League
Feng Yu-fang (died January 1949)	Democratic League
Fu Ting-yi	Independent (intellectual)
Han Chao-o	Democratic League
Ho Chü	Unknown
Hou Wai-lu	Independent (writer)
Hsieh Hsueh-hung	Formosan League for Democratic Self-Government
Hsu Pao-chu	San Min Chu I Comrades' Association
Hu Yu-chih (Hu Yu-tsu)	Chairman, Chinese Democratic League of Malaya; a professional journalist and editor
Huang Chen-sheng	Unknown
Hung Shen	Independent
Hüan Hsiang (Huang Hsiang?)	Independent (journalist)
K'ung Te-chih	Unknown
Kuo Mo-jo	Independent (archaeologist and writer)
Lai Ya-li	Unknown
Li Chi-shen	Kuomintang Revolutionary Committee
Li Hsi-chiu	Unknown
Li Min-hsin	"
Li Teh-chuan (Mrs. Feng Yu-hsiang)	Kuomintang Revolutionary Committee
Lin Yi-yüan	Unknown

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Name of Delegate	Party Affiliation
Liu Ch'ing-yang (wife of Chang Shen-fu)	National Salvation Association; Democratic League
Lu Hsün, Mrs. (Hsü Kuang-ping)	Widow of writer, Lu Hsün
Ma Hsü-lun	Democratic Promotion Society
Mao Tun (Shen Yen-ping)	Independent (dramatist)
Mei Kung-pin	Kuomintang Revolutionary Committee
P'eng Tse-min (Tso-min)	Democratic League; also Kuomintang Revolutionary Committee
Sha Ch'ien-li	National Salvation Association
Shen Ch'iang	Unknown
Shen Chih-yüan	Democratic League; National Salvation Association
Shen Chün-ju	Democratic League; National Salvation Association
Shen Tzu-chiu (Mrs. Hu Yu-chih)	Chinese Democratic League of Malaya
Shih Ts'un-t'ung	Unknown (suspected to be a former member of the Chinese Communist Party)
Sun Ch'i-meng	Democratic Reconstruction Association
T'an P'ing-shan	San Min Chu I Comrades' Association; Kuomintang Revolutionary Committee
Teng Ch'u-min	Democratic League; College Teachers' League
T'ien Han	Independent (playwright)
Ts'ai T'ing K'ai	Kuomintang Revolutionary Committee; Democratic Promotion Society
Wang Shao-ao	Democratic Promotion Society

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Name of Delegate	Party Affiliation
Wang K'un-lun, (Mrs. Tsao Meng-chun)	Democratic League
Wang Yün-ju	Unknown
Wu Han	Independent (intellectual); possibly member of Democratic League
Wu Mao-sun (Mason Wu)	Kuomintang Revolutionary Committee
Yang Kang	Independent woman journalist
Yen Hsin-min	Unknown
Yüan Chen	Independent (professor)

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